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## The Decree and Encyclical of 1907.

BY THE REV. ARTHUR GALTON, M.A.

ON Wednesday, the Third of July, 1907, the Congregation of the Holy Office, known popularly as the Inquisition, issued a Decree, which is entitled, as usual, from the Latin words with which it opens, *Lamentabili sane exitu*. The document strikes a sad and warning note. It arraigns our times as "impatient of all control," as "inquiring too deeply into the causes of things," and as "falling thereby into the gravest errors." "Most perilous of all are these errors when they touch upon the sacred sciences, on the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, and on the chief mysteries of the faith." And so it seemed good to the Most Eminent and Reverend Cardinals, the Inquisitors General in matters of faith and morals, to look into the spirit of the age, to brand and reprove what they find amiss in it, so that these errors may not take root, and the faithful may be on their guard. So says this lugubrious pronouncement. The Inquisitors, to facilitate their object, have drawn up sixty-five propositions, extracted, as they say, from certain recent books, though no titles are quoted and no authors are named; and these sixty-five propositions, which must be taken to summarize the theological errors of our time, are condemned. This document was submitted to Pius X. on the following day, Thursday, the Fourth of July, and was approved by him.

More than this, the Decree, or Syllabus of Errors, was followed up by an Encyclical Letter, ostensibly from the Pope himself. In this Pius X. enlarges on his pastoral office, and inveighs bitterly against the persons, the characters, and the opinions of those whom he describes as Modernists.

These documents, the propositions which they condemn, some of the current opinions of our time, the external position and the internal crisis of the Papal system, are all well worth considering by us, both as English Churchmen and as fellow-

citizens of many who still accept and are affected by that Papal jurisdiction which we rejected nearly four centuries ago.

In the first place, it may be remembered that Pius IX. issued a Syllabus of modern errors in 1864; and two points in connection with it may be noted, because they show the difference, both of external position or estimation and of internal condition, between the Papal system forty years ago and the Papacy as it is now. The Syllabus of Pius IX. was a political event. It caused an immense sensation. It even caused some anxiety in certain countries and to several governments. Politicians and statesmen were preoccupied by it. Diplomats wrote and talked. The Press was agitated. The *Times* produced a leading article, and *Punch* a cartoon. In contrast with all this, the Syllabus of Pius X. may be said to have come into the world still-born. Outside the Roman Catholic Press it was barely noticed. It did not give a moment's anxiety to any politician. Probably not a single diplomatic note was written in consequence of its publication. To the great world it was an event, an utterance, of absolute unimportance.

As the former Syllabus had some political effects, so it may also be described as chiefly political in its contents. Social and political matters occupy the foreground in this document. Theological questions are of secondary importance. Pius IX., it is true, condemned the rights of conscience, of philosophy and of science; but he condemned even more bitterly the legal and political theories which had been formulated in 1789, and which are accepted now by all civilized societies. The Encyclical of 1864 was a protest against everything which is believed and valued by the modern State. The Pope declared that the Church is a complete and perfect society; independent, by right, of all temporal authority; superior to the State; possessing exclusively the control of education. He condemned the principles of popular sovereignty and of universal suffrage. He denied all freedom of worship, of conscience, of the Press, of speech. He claimed coercive powers for the Church, and the right to condemn or impede legislation of which it does not approve.

The Civil Power may not come between the Pope and individual Christians. Such theories destroy the Civil Power. They lead either to anarchy or to tyranny. The eighty clauses of this Syllabus cover the whole field of human activity; but what strikes an observer most is their exaggeration. Modern society is painted all in black. It has only material aims. Its education is necessarily corrupt. Its philosophy is not only erroneous, but malevolent. No one can look back honestly on the nineteenth century and say that Pius described it accurately. The results which he anticipated have not happened. His diagnosis was manifestly untrue when it was drawn up, and the experience of forty years has stultified it even more. It is impossible to have any confidence in a physician who has been proved mistaken.

There is one statement of Pius IX., however, which the Papacy has been able to substantiate. "The Roman Pontiff," he said, "cannot, and should not, reconcile himself with progress, Liberalism, and modern civilization." Papal apologists, especially in England, minimized the Syllabus of 1864; but the technical question, whether it be infallible or no, is of little importance except to Roman Catholics. What is of importance, to the larger world, is that the Syllabus represents the mind of the Papacy with regard to social, political, and intellectual questions, as well as to the relations between the State and the Church, and the constitution of society. The Syllabus also represents what the action and policy of the Church would be, if it had power to carry out its theories. As a proof of this, we have not only the utterances of Italian dignitaries, but the statements of numerous leading French Ultramontanes in all their controversies with Liberalism during the reign of Pius IX. and in the earlier years of Leo XIII. These advocates, far from minimizing the Syllabus, accepted its literal interpretation, and were prepared to carry its theories into practice. The principles of the Syllabus were for them, not only a model, but an obligation, both in Church and State, and in the relations between them. The principles of the Syllabus are incompatible with our English institutions, as well as with the ideals of modern France.

As a proof of the latter, we may point to the incessant friction between the Papacy and the Third Republic, which has led inevitably to Separation. If there has not been similar friction in England, it is because the English Romanists are so small a body, and because their ecclesiastical leaders have had the prudence not to emphasize the radical and irreconcilable differences between Papal and English principles.

The present Syllabus is occupied entirely with questions of theology. It condemns certain propositions with regard to Scripture, to the value of dogma, to the Sacraments, to ecclesiastical tradition, and still more to ecclesiastical authority as represented by the Papacy. We must not suppose from this remarkable change that the Pope has ceased to be interested in politics, or to believe in political and diplomatic methods. There is still a Centre Party in Germany and a clerical majority in Belgium. Voters are still manipulated in Ireland and in the United States. The clerical press is more active and numerous than ever. Not a single claim of the Papacy has been abrogated or even modified. But events and experience have proved that the Papacy can no longer influence our European populations directly. These experiences are confirmed by the affairs of Italy since 1870. And recent events in France have shown that the Papacy is quite impotent there as a social or a political factor. When Pius IX. wrote his Syllabus, he could coerce or disturb the government of Napoleon III., and he seriously embarrassed the early governments of the Republic. During the Separation controversy, Pius X. could neither influence the electors, nor the elected, nor the Ministry, nor the great mass of the population, except in ways which were disastrous to himself and his adherents. This enormous change, to sum it up shortly, is due to education. Under the Empire a large percentage of Frenchmen were illiterate, and education itself was a clerical monopoly. Under the Republic illiteracy has gradually declined, and education has been detached more and more from ecclesiastical control.

To education, also, we must attribute those enormous in-

tellectual changes which are marked so clearly by the condemned propositions in the Syllabus of Pius X. In 1870 it was possible to define Papal infallibility in the face of history. The few prelates and theologians who appealed to history against the dogma were as voices crying in the wilderness. They had no intelligent hearers, no sympathizers. "The Church triumphed over history," as Manning boasted. At present, if the dogma were proposed, it certainly could not be passed. Its opponents would be more numerous, and they would appeal to a clerical majority in all educated countries, so marvellously has the knowledge of history grown during the last forty years. And not only the knowledge, but the interest in it, and a scientific method of dealing with it. The nineteenth century was the great age of history and of science. During its course, our knowledge of man, our knowledge of nature, were revolutionized; and this revolution is bearing its fruit in the twentieth century by necessitating a reconstruction of theology. The Decree *Lamentabili* and the Encyclical *Pascendi* are the Papal protest against the necessity; or, in other words, against the intellectual position and conclusions of the educated majority.

Now, we hold no brief for the Modernists. Many orthodox Christians, besides the Pope, are no doubt startled and scandalized by some of their conclusions. By denying Papal infallibility, we do not thereby assert the infallibility of those who oppose the Papacy. What we do protest against is the way in which the Modernists are treated, and the methods by which the Papacy has chosen to combat Modernism.

With regard to the first, there have been many answers to the Papal utterance, especially in France and Italy. In these replies the authors invariably point out that it is not their real opinion, but a parody of their opinions, which is condemned. They complain both of being misunderstood, and of being garbled or misquoted. In these matters the complainants undoubtedly prove their case. Secondly, the incriminated parties have been tried and condemned unheard, according to those detestable principles and that abominable procedure which

still prevail in the Roman Congregations. Thirdly, some of the condemned Modernists point out, not only how unfair, but how disastrous the new methods are which the Vatican has devised for combating and persecuting the new opinions. They show that these methods will necessarily destroy all thought, all independence, all scholarship; they will sterilize the Church, and separate it still more from the sympathies of educated men. The repressive methods of the sixteenth century are extended and increased. Dilators, inquisitors are established in every diocese. A system of mistrust and espionage is set up on a scale which the world as yet has never known.

Now, in all these matters our sympathies must be wholly with the Modernists. They are merely claiming those rights and that freedom which we possess ourselves, and without which learning and progress are impossible.

The world has moved, not only since the thirteenth century, but since the sixteenth. It has not only moved, but grown; and if theology be a living science, it must move and grow with all other spheres of thought and knowledge. We believe that things new, as well as old, have their value in religion; that God fulfils Himself in many ways, and reveals Himself in divers manners. We also believe that truth in the end will find its level and prevail; but truth can only be reached by freedom of research and freedom of speech. Scholarship must never be impeded. The untrue, the worthless, will perish of themselves, provided no force be used. Force is worse than valueless in spiritual and intellectual matters. These are some of the lessons which we have learnt from Church history, and we apply them confidently to our own existing problems, and to the present crisis in the Roman Church.

That there is a crisis is undeniable. In France the majority of the younger clergy are Modernists. Italy is fermenting with growth and change. America has already caused the gravest anxiety to Rome; and what is called Americanism is only in its beginning. It is bound to mature and organize. Many of the Modernists have come to those conclusions about the Papacy

which were formulated by our own Reformers in the sixteenth century. Instead of triumphing over history, the Papacy is once more at the bar of history, waiting to receive sentence from some of those who have so long accepted it.

We cannot leave these burning questions without referring to Cardinal Newman. Though he has not been censured as yet, by name, yet a large part of his work is undoubtedly hit by the condemnations of the Decree; and it will be impossible for his name and some of his works to escape uncensured if the Papal policy be continued logically. Indeed, this is foreshadowed in the curious reservations which have been made in the official utterances about him. And how strange is Newman's present position and probable fate! He is an object certainly of suspicion to many Ultramontanes, and it is an open secret that he is disliked particularly by the theologian who is chiefly responsible for the latest Papal utterances. To the Modernists he is nothing less than a prophet, an inspirer. They all appeal to him, revere him, believe in him. How far he would have liked this liberal approval is a curious question, since his great battle was against Liberalism. Whatever damage Newman may have done to the Church of England, it may prove in the end that he has done infinitely more to the Church of Rome, or at any rate to the traditional Papacy.

In a following article it is proposed to examine Modernism and Vaticanism as they are exhibited by recent ecclesiastical events in France.



### Revivals Past and Present.

BY THE REV. CANON W. HAY M. H. AITKEN, M.A.

THE wave of Revival that recently swept over a great part of the Principality of Wales may now be said to have subsided, leaving, however, according to the statements of many who are well qualified to judge, permanent results of a highly satisfactory character. As is always the case in such